

Amendment to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A drug dispenser comprising:

a drug case for containing a plurality of drug packages stacked in a vertical direction, each of the plurality of drug packages being a rectangular package having a flange at an upper side of the package;

a pushing mechanism for pushing out from the drug case the lowermost drug package in a horizontal direction, the pushing mechanism including rails for supporting the lowermost drug package as it is moved in the horizontal direction by the pushing mechanism; and

a guide member immovably fixed on an inner surface of a side wall of the drug case separately from the pushing mechanism for supporting and guiding the ~~flange~~flanges, which extend in a pushing direction of the pushing mechanism, of both the~~of the~~ second drug package as it descends when the lowermost drug package is being pushed out and the lowermost drug package, the guide member being provided in a pushing direction of the pushing mechanism.

2. (Previously Presented) The drug dispenser of Claim 1, wherein the guide member is provided on at least one side of the pushing direction.

3. (Previously Presented) The drug dispenser of Claim 1, wherein the guide member is extended toward a downstream side of the pushing direction.

4. (Previously Presented) The drug dispenser of Claim 1, wherein the guide member supports and guides the flange of the drug package on an upstream side of the pushing direction.

5. (Currently Amended) A dispenser for dispensing drugs contained in a package having an upper flange, said dispenser comprising:

an upper case for containing a plurality of the packages stacked in a vertical direction;

a lower case connected to a lower end of said upper case;

a pushing mechanism, disposed in said lower case, for pushing out and dispensing from the upper case the lowermost package in a horizontal pushing direction, said pushing mechanism including ~~a pair of rails~~ at least one rail for supporting the lowermost package as it is pushed out in the horizontal pushing direction; and

at least one guide member fixedly disposed on an inner sidewall of said lower case for supporting and guiding the flange of the second lowermost package when the lowermost package is pushed out by said pushing mechanism, said guide member being fixed on said inner sidewall so as to be immovable and disposed above said pushing mechanism.

6. (Previously Presented) The dispenser of claim 5, wherein said pushing mechanism further comprises a screw disposed below and extending along the rails, and a pushing claw adapted to be driven in a forward direction and in a reverse direction upon rotation of the screw.

7. (Previously Presented) The dispenser as claimed in claim 5, wherein said at least one guide member comprises a pair of guide members disposed on opposite side walls of said lower case.

8. (Previously Presented) The dispenser as claimed in claim 6, wherein said at least one guide member comprises a pair of guide members disposed on opposite side walls of said lower case,

and said guide members protrude from the side walls of said lower case and are disposed above said rails so that a bottom surface of the lowermost package will not contact the rails when supported in a horizontal position by said guide members.

9. (Previously Presented) The dispenser as claimed in claim 8, wherein said guide members function to support the flange of the second lowermost drug package when an upstream end of the second lowermost package, with respect to the pushing direction, drops due to the lowermost package being pushed out by said pushing mechanism.

10. (Previously Presented) The dispenser of claim 6, wherein said pushing claw is normally disposed in a vertical orientation and is adapted to be moved to a horizontal orientation when driven in the reverse direction.

11. (New) A dispenser for dispensing drugs contained in a package having an upper flange, said dispenser comprising:

a case for containing a plurality of the packages stacked in a vertical direction;

a pushing mechanism, disposed in said case, for pushing out and dispensing from the case the lowermost package in a horizontal pushing direction, said pushing mechanism including a rail for supporting the lowermost package as it is pushed out in the horizontal pushing direction; and

at least one guide member fixedly disposed on an inner sidewall of said case for supporting and guiding the flange of the second lowermost package when the lowermost package is pushed out by said pushing mechanism, said guide member being disposed above said pushing mechanism and fixed in said inner sidewall so as to be immovable.

12. (New) The drug dispenser of Claim 11, wherein the guide member is provided on at least one side of the pushing direction.

13. (New) The drug dispenser of Claim 11, wherein the guide member extends longitudinally toward a downstream side of the pushing direction.

14. (New) The drug dispenser of Claim 11, wherein the guide member supports and guides the flange of the drug package on an upstream side of the case relative to the pushing direction.